

# The Missive, May 2023

## First Presbyterian Church

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*Lent gave us 40 Days, not counting Sundays, through which to prepare for the Easter Celebration. Easter came and then we are given 50 Days, counting Sundays, through which to Celebrate. Easter is not a one day event; our church fathers gave to us a season long in which to mark, remember, reflect on and celebrate the Resurrection. It is a Gift given, though not necessarily a Gift opened.*

*In one way of thinking, the Resurrection was the confirmation of the Announcement and Promise given to Mary of Nazareth that her Son Jesus was and would be Immanuel, God with us. The Resurrection and Transfiguration of Jesus marks a specifically physical event which restored Jesus to His Chosen Apostles and Disciples and all who would call Him Lord, meaning including all of us. The 50 Days following Easter are the opportunity to contemplate how it is that we can and do include the Living Jesus in all our thinking, in all our daily lives. When you see beauty, do you think of Jesus, or think Jesus might be sharing that beauty with you? When decisions need to be made, do you think of Jesus as one of the guides considering the different options? When confronted with something wrong, is it Jesus Who helps you understand it is wrong and why it is wrong and what to do about it....now/then? When at home with family, when feasting at the table, is Jesus at table with you-all?*

*A prayer before meals I learned as a child is –  
Come Lord Jesus, be our guest.  
Let these gifts to us be blest.*

*The prayer is addressed to Jesus and invited Jesus and gave thanks to Jesus, as if, and in reality as, Jesus sits at table with us, with me and my family. It is a simple little prayer, but was and could be a daily reminder of Jesus with us, beside us, walking with us. It was kind-of a daily exercise reminding me of Easter.*

*Sometimes, after Easter, I would take home the Easter Lily or the blooming azalea which had been placed on the Communion Table. I would plant the lily in the garden watching it grow restrengthening itself, knowing that it would come up to bloom the following year. It served as a continuing reminder of Easter and all the Easters the white blooming lilies represented.*

*Ken Hetzel*

*PS. I would be remiss if I didn't offer a prayer of thanks for the many efforts of our elders and deacons in these testing days. I pray the time they are giving to all of us might be returned to them in blessings and seeing the results of their many efforts.*

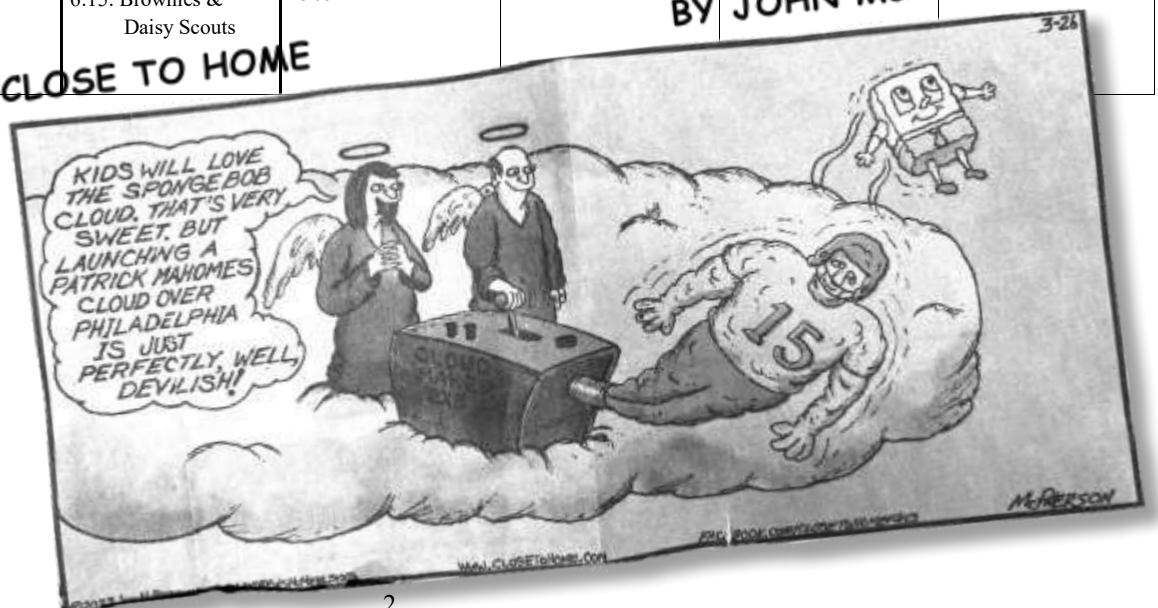
*And I should and we should remember Erin in our prayers for the diligent care for Mark, and our prayers for Mark as he exercises to recovery.*

# MAY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 11:30: Membership & Fellowship 1:00: Pastoral Care Team 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts	<b>2</b> 9:00: GPP Walking Grp. 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	<b>3</b> 10:00: Food Pantry 12:00: Seasoned Seniors 6:00: Girl Scouts 7:00: Mission Committee	<b>4</b> 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 5:00: Girl Scouts	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:45: Worship with Communion & Sunday School 12:00: Jack n Jill End-of-Year Party	<b>8</b> 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts	<b>9</b> 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 7:00: Shared Blessings	<b>10</b> 10:00: Food Pantry 4:30: Worship & Music 5:30: Girl Scouts 6:00: Girl Scouts 6:15: Session Meeting	<b>11</b> 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 6:00: Deacons Meeting	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> ~ <i>Mother's Day</i> ~ 9:45: Worship, 2¢-a-Meal & Sunday School	<b>15</b> 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:30: Boy Scouts	<b>16</b> 10:00 Connected Threads at Beacon Point 10:00: Food Pantry 10:30: Christian Ed Leadership Team 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	<b>17</b> 10:00: Food Pantry 1:00: GPP Walking Grp. 6:00: Girl Scouts 7:00: Praying in Color	<b>18</b> 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 5:00: Girl Scouts	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Noon: Boy Scouts
<b>21</b> 9:45: Worship & Sunday School 11:15: Just Love 2:00: Student Piano Recital	<b>22</b> 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:00: Boy Scouts	<b>23</b> 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry	<b>24</b> 10:00: Food Pantry 12:00: ARC Blood Drive 5:30: Girl Scouts 6:00: Girl Scouts	<b>25</b> 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 7:00: Moms Group	<b>26</b> 10:00: Jack n Jill Graduation	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:45: Worship & Sunday School	<b>29</b> ~ <i>Memorial Day</i> ~ 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:30: Boy Scouts	<b>30</b> 8:00: Men's Breakfast 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	<b>31</b> 10:00: Food Pantry 5:00: Gull Lake HS Baccalaureate 6:00: Girl Scouts			

BY JOHN McPHERSON

CLOSE TO HOME



# May Birthdays

1..... Harold Gobble	15..... Kara Reinhardt	24..... Chloe Wieber
1..... Gavin Inman	16..... Joyce Gibson	25..... Chris Koffend
2..... Jason Lindenberg	16..... Carolyn Gruys	26..... Anna Gross
3..... Amber Beals	17..... Vicky Langshaw Thomas	26..... Carrie Sutton
3..... Marcia Delf	17..... Larry Myland	27..... Poppy Smith
4..... Bruce Howard	17..... Joan Willemstyn	27..... Tom Webb
4..... Alexander Inman	18..... Shannan Deater	27..... Eric Wines
5..... Bill Mattes	19..... Alison Butler	27..... Erica Wines Smith
5..... Anna Bea Miller	19..... Carolyn Venner	28..... Tony White
6..... Branden Burris	20..... Sandra Gobble	29..... Kaitlyn Quada
6..... Vicki Janson	20..... Tyson Putt	29..... Lynne Quada
6..... Alexander Scott	21..... Ken Hetzel	29..... Jason Rairigh
11..... Nancy Remley	21..... Haylee Inman	29..... Caty Zick
12..... Lindsay Webb	21..... David Stasevich	31..... George Becker
13..... Emily Mattes	22..... Lee Coverly	31..... Larke Lindenberg
14..... Barb Brundage	22..... Mara Juodawlkis	

## & Anniversaries

2..... Judy & Ted Ruser for 42 years	22..... Laura & DJ LaLonde for 47 years
5..... Debbie & Ken Sunden for 33 years	24..... Erin & Mark Jennings for 37 years
7..... Cheryl & Bob Reinhardt for 46 years	25..... Jennifer & Mike Odar for 27 years
7..... Shari & Rick Wynsma for 35 years	26..... Jean & Walt Stafford for 61 years
9..... Sandra & Harold Gobble for 59 years	27..... Sharon & Steve Sorrell for 40 years
10..... Sandy & Ken Barts for 43 years	27..... Sandra & Dan Weigel for 34 years
11..... Amy & Mike Juodawlkis for 27 years	28..... Jill & Tim Bair for 40 years
12..... Katie & Gavin Inman for 22 years	28..... Ronda & Ed Schaadt for 57 years
21..... Jilisa & Mark Williams for 29 years	30..... Kim & Jim Saunders for 41 years
22..... Marcia & Robert Delf for 47 years	



## Carillon Hymns and Honoree

<i>Date</i> .....	<i>Selection</i>	<i>Honoree</i>
8 <sup>th</sup> .....	<i>How Great Thou Art</i>	<i>Isaac Henry &amp; Daisy Berg</i>
12 <sup>th</sup> .....	<i>Sweet Hour if Prayer</i>	<i>Elizabeth</i>
13 <sup>th</sup> .....	<i>All Things Bright &amp; Beautiful</i>	<i>Dorothy Hubbell Stimson</i>
17 <sup>th</sup> .....	<i>God of Grace &amp; God of Glory</i>	<i>Larry's Birthday</i>
17 <sup>th</sup> .....	<i>O Master Let me Walk with Thee</i>	<i>Wanda H. Griffiths</i>
21 <sup>st</sup> .....	<i>Hymn of Praise</i>	<i>Brad Hoorn</i>
31 <sup>st</sup> .....	<i>Little Brown Church in the Vale</i>	<i>Millard Murphy</i>



### FPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### JUNE PICNIC

June 11th - immediately following worship, join us for a Picnic in the Park to celebrate KidsFirst and the end of our program year. More details will be shared in our weekly Thursday emails

#### CONNECTED THREADS

Connected Threads will be meeting every third Tuesday, 10 am, at Beacon Pointe. All other Tuesday meetings will continue to meet in the Resource Center.

#### MEN'S BREAKFAST

Food and Fellowship. The last Tuesday of each Month, April 24th, 8am at Liz's Parkview Café.

#### RICHLAND FOOD PANTRY

Call 269.343.3663 to make an appointment. Tues. & Wed. 10 - 12.

# Small Group Ministries

by Amber Beals

**Praying in Color**, Wednesday, May 17, 7pm at the Deacon Brown House: Join Sandra and Amber in learning a new prayer technique, based on the book by Sybil MacBeth. You do not need to have any art skills whatsoever. Just be willing to doodle. Drawing supplies will be provided.

**Gull Prairie Walking Group**: May 2 at 9am and May 17 at 1pm. Meet in the North church parking lot. Watch Facebook for cancellations. We may adjust these dates starting in June for the summer as afternoons get quite hot in the preserve, so watch for some changes next month.

**Moms' Group**: May 25, 7pm. Join other moms in the Deacon Brown House for some fellowship and conversation! Watch for details as we get closer.

**Possible small groups over the next few months:**  
Be sure to watch those Thursday emails!

- Saturday Morning Bike ride
- Progressive Dinner (hopefully out on your decks!)
- Shalom visit to their woolery to learn more about what they do.
- Door Hanger Painting

Also, if you have a request of something you would like to see happen as a small group or if you would like to host some type of a small group event at your house, please let me know! Maybe you want to take a small group out on the lake in your boat, or maybe you have an amazing yard or deck. Reach out to me if you'd like to share it with others from the church for a small group event!

**CLUE**: May 12-14: Gull Lake Schools Performing Arts Company is putting on their spring performance of CLUE. Although we are not organizing a group event, we have at least three Richland Pres members involved, so be sure to get yourself a ticket and attend. Consider inviting some friends from church to join you!

**Library Cart**: Be sure to visit the library cart and check out a book! We have a lot of good books on there! We are trying to find the best spot where people stop by to visit it, so you may find it moving around a bit in the Fireplace room or Gull Prairie Room. You can find instructions on the clipboard on the cart. A special thank you to the Monks and Fosters for helping with hauling old books away—though more old books keep showing up in other places in the church—a project for another day! Also, Joan and Sandra and Brooke have been incredibly helpful with selecting books. We have some amazing readers in our church. And another thank you to Just Love for their recent donation of a few books to the library cart!

**April Dads (and Kids) Bowling Event**: What a fun night for the dads and kids to spend some time getting to know each other better at Richland Lanes! We had 19 people come (7 dads and 12 kids). The dads did a great job assisting their kids while giving moms a break at home. It was a little wild at first, but gradually the chaos was organized and everyone seemed to have a blast!



# Celebrating EARTH Day, April 22, 2023 (and every day!)

by Rick Foster

The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants, belong to the Lord.

– Psalm 24:1

Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God.

– 1 Peter 4:10

The First Presbyterian Church of Richland became an Earth Care Congregation of the Presbyterian Church USA in 2018. At that time, we chose to pledge to be good stewards of the God given blessings that are all around us. Below, find the Earth Care Pledge and some of the actions taken to preserve our church and the environment around it.

The Earth Care Pledge of peace and justice is God's plan for all creation. The earth and all creation are God's. God calls us to be careful, humble stewards of this earth, and to protect and restore it for its own sake, and for the future use and enjoyment of the human family. As God offers all people the special gift of peace through Jesus Christ, we are called to deal justly with one another and the earth.

1. Our worship and discipleship will celebrate God's grace and glory in creation and declare that God calls us to cherish, protect and be good stewards of this earth.

Actions/Activities:

- Maintain an Earth Care Congregation committee to spearhead local and community events.
- Focus several sermons each year on Earth Care and Environmental Stewardship.
- Conduct worship services focused on Earth Care and preserving the environment.
- Conduct outdoor services in the Spring and Summer.
- Display Earth Care Banner/Symbol during services, on new church signage, and throughout the church facility.

2. In education, we will seek learning and teaching opportunities to know and understand the threats to God's creation and the damage already inflicted. We will encourage and support each other in finding ways of keeping and healing the creation in response to God's call to earth keeping, justice and community. Actions/Activities:

- Provide adult education opportunities during Earth Day observances.
- Infuse Earth Care into youth education and Sunday school classes.
- Plant and maintain flower gardens around the church and adjacent properties.
- Plant and maintain pollinator/butterfly gardens (2023).
- Create an Earth Care mural on Deacon Brown property (2023).
- Plant new trees, shrubs, and flowers to beautify the church grounds.
- Promote Earth Care on church Facebook, Website, and social media.

3. Our facilities will be managed, maintained and upgraded in a manner that respects and cherishes all creation, human and non-human, while meeting equitably the needs of all people.

In our buildings and on our grounds, we will use energy efficiently, conserve resources, and share what we have in abundance so that God's holy creation will be sustainable for all life and future generations. Actions/Activities:

- Replace furnaces and air conditioners with high efficiency models when possible.
- Weatherproof doors and windows.
- Replace conventional lighting with highly efficient LED lighting.
- Maintain an outside Memorial Garden and a place for prayer and contemplation.
- Purchase, maintain adjacent property for community use.
- Remove trash and diseased trees and plant new trees, shrubs, and flowers.
- Actively recycle plastics, glass, cardboard, & yard waste.

4. Our outreach will encourage public policy and community involvement that protects and restores the vulnerable and degraded earth as well as oppressed and neglected people. We will be mindful that our personal and collective actions can positively or negatively affect our neighborhood, region, nation and world. We will seek to achieve environmental justice through coalitions and ecumenical partnerships. Actions/Activities:

- Conduct highway cleanup campaigns.
- Work with Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to clean and preserve outside areas, maintain flower gardens, and remove diseased trees.
- Partner with the Gull Prairie Preserve to reestablish a natural 160-acre grassland prairie, oak tree savannahs, natural berry patches, and hiking trails next to the church. Use church parking lot as hiking trailhead.
- Maintain the Northern Kalamazoo Country Food Pantry in partnership with Loaves and Fishes to distribute food donations to food insecure families.

God owns everything, and we are called upon to manage it for Him. The responsible management of these God-given resources is called stewardship. We are called to be God's stewards, just as we call on God to love and protect us.

First Presbyterian Church of Richland Earth Care Committee: Steve Allen, Amber Beals, Glenn Fontaine, Rick Foster, Steve Sutherland, Andee Troutman



## Paper Grocery Bags Needed

by Paul Gobble



Both the upcoming Rummage Sale on June 9th and 10th, and the Richland Food Pantry open in the Gull Prairie Room every Tuesday and Wednesday, need your clean, folded, like new, paper grocery bags. Please take a second to check for forgotten receipts you may have left in the bag, then drop them by the office. They will be well used and greatly appreciated.

## Food Pantry Shopping List

by Paul Gobble

The Richland Food Pantry is still eager to accept donations to help members of our community with food insecurities. Currently, our pantry is wanting boxed breakfast cereals, canned soups, and canned vegetables other than corn, green beans or peas. Monetary gifts can also be directed to the food pantry by specifying it as the intended recipient on your church offering envelopes.

## Just Love

by Sandy Carahaly



**Save the Date!** We will be celebrating Pride Month with a special worship service on June 11. This year our focus is on Allyship, and we are asking YOU to participate in the following ways:

- Wear bright colors to Worship – BE the rainbow!
- We are putting together a special addition to the worship bulletin with stories (or statements or poems or pictures) about Allyship. Why is it important to be an ally? What has an ally done for you? How have you been an ally to others? What does allyship mean to you? Do you have something to share? Send it to [Sandy@Carahaly.com](mailto:Sandy@Carahaly.com) for inclusion in the package. We are looking forward to having a LOT of contributions! (If you would like to remain anonymous please let us know!)

Do you LOVE our new logo? We do! It was designed by our very own Marz Carahaly. If you see Marz around, be sure to give them props for their creativity and commitment to the group mission!

Our May meeting is scheduled for May 21 at 11:15 in the Deacon Brown House. All are welcome!

### Recommended Reading:

Trans-Forming Proclamation: A Transgender Theology of Daring Existence by Liam M. Hooper  
A Minute to Learn: Day of Silence (April 27)

### A Minute to Learn: Pronouns

We are all familiar with traditional/binary personal pronouns (he/she) but non-binary and gender expansive people may choose to use different personal pronouns. They/ them pronouns are most common; you can see how “them” and ”their” were used above, in the recognition of our new logo. Neopronouns (xe/xem, e/em, and others) are less common, but some people prefer them because they do not elicit preconceptions about “grammar.” (It should be noted, however, that singular “they” has been in use for centuries, and is approved for use by all major style guides.) It's important to respect a person's pronouns, and if you're not sure what to use, it's OK to ask! And if you happen to make a mistake (we all do!), acknowledge it, correct yourself, and move on. Practice makes progress.

### Days of Significance, May, 2023

- May 17: International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
- May 19: Agender Pride Day
- May 22: Harvey Milk Day



## NEED FOOD?

Our food programs are **FREE** and serve all of Kalamazoo County\*.

### GROCERY PANTRY PROGRAM

- No eligibility requirements. No ID required.
- Pick-up groceries 2 times per month.
- Someone else can pick up on your behalf.
- Home deliveries available county-wide.
- Non-perishable food as well as fresh produce, meat, dairy, bread, and eggs.
- At least four days' worth of food for everyone in your household.
- Special dietary needs? Let us know!

**To Schedule A Same-Day Pantry Pick-Up:**  
 Call 269.343.3663 Monday-Friday from 9AM-4PM  
 If you are unable to call or reach us during these times,  
 email [info@kzoolf.org](mailto:info@kzoolf.org) or message us on Facebook.

**NEED FOOD LINE: 269.343.3663**

901 PORTAGE STREET, KALAMAZOO KZOOLF.ORG INFO@KZOOLF.ORG  
\*If you live outside the County and need assistance, give us a call. We may be able to help.

The need is constant.  
The gratification is instant.  
Give blood.



**American  
Red Cross**

# **First Presbyterian Church**

8047 Church St. | Richland, MI 49083

**May 24**

**Noon - 6 PM**

Contact The Red Cross to make  
your appointment to give.

[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) | 1-800-RED CROSS

## “Upcoming Sundays”

by Rev. Pat Weatherwax

Dear friends,

As spring dashes quickly along I want to tell you about my visit with Mark Jennings late in April, at the Borgess Gardens. I appreciated his clear thinking and speaking. His wit is back. While his left side and especially his left leg remain very weak, his mind and spirit are lively! We talked about this being a marathon not a sprint, and being hopeful for continuing progress. I continued to be impressed by the recovery he’s made. Please continue to pray for him, Erin and his care team.

I thought you might appreciate knowing who is filling the pulpit on the upcoming Sundays. Here’s a bit of biographical information about those you will see going forward, until Mark returns.

Grace and peace,  
Pat Weatherwax

**Nathan Martens** has worked in health care since 1990. He’s an inquirer under the care of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. His second year at Western Theological Seminary in Holland is almost complete.

Nathan and his wife, Wendy, were married at Richland First Presbyterian on 1/2/21. He has two college aged kids. Betsy will graduate from Valparaiso on May 14. Nick is a junior at the University of Michigan.

Their canine kids are Pembroke Welsh Corgis. Addie is 11 and Tillie is nine months. They also have a cat named Gus.

**Rev. Bob Bond** graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary in 2005 and was ordained the same year in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. He was trained in intentional interim ministry and has served most of his calling as an intentional interim. He’s served eight different congregations. Bob lives in Kalamazoo with his Dog D. D is short for D.Min or Doctor of Ministry, joking that it was the only way he was going to get a D.Min.

**Rev. Kathleen Robertson King** graduated from Louisville Seminary in 1999, and was ordained in 2000. Kathleen is a campus minister at United Campus Ministry in Kalamazoo, which provides students with service/learning and social justice opportunities rooted in racial equity work in Kalamazoo and beyond. She is married to Kevin, a librarian, and mother to two delightful young adult daughters, Abigail and Rachael. Kathleen adores art in all its forms, including paintings, movies, novels, poetry, an eclectic selection of music, time in the kitchen, and is always up for a walk in the great outdoors, no matter the weather. For Kathleen, life without a dog is incomplete.

**Rev. Pat Weatherwax** is returning to Richland’s pulpit, 1-2 times a month, going forward. Something you haven’t heard about is that Pat works, on call a couple of days each week, as a medical examiner investigator, in Calhoun Co. This is a department of WMed, the medical school in Kalamazoo. Thirteen counties are served out of the department of pathology at WMed. Investigators respond to deaths that happen outside of hospice care or not under direct inpatient hospital care. It feels to Pat that this work is a mix of chaplaincy and nursing, and usually only takes her away from her husband at home for a few hours each week. Pat likes dogs, but currently only has a scaredy-cat named Bella Boo.

If you have suggestions for “supply pastors” please contact Sandy Hart or Rick Foster.

## From The Library Cart

by Barbara Monk



A book review for [This Is How It Always Is](#), a novel by Laurie Frankel. Look for this title on the FPC Library Cart.

This family of boys readily accept all their children’s quirks and comical antics, even when their youngest child, Claude, at a very young age has a preference for girl toys and clothing over the usual boy stuff. The family comes to realize that Poppy (Claude) is not going through a phase, and they and their community accept her for who she really is, a transgender child. After a traumatic experience, the family moves across country, and for the good of their family, they keep Poppy’s previous gender identity (male) a secret. This completely changes the family dynamics, which causes turmoil, conflict, and emotional issues they never faced when they could be open and honest about their transgender child.

The author is a parent of a transgender daughter, but this story is purely fiction, and not her family’s story. Though her own family has not lived this story plot, it is her voice of being a parent of a gender dysphoric child that gives this novel its strength. Currently on Amazon there are over 35,700 reviews with an overall rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars.



# Rummage Sale

## SALE DATES

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The Annual Summer Rummage Sale will be Friday, June 9th, from 9 am – 3 pm, then 5 – 7 pm, and Saturday, June 10th, from 9 – 11:30 am. All items will be sold for the prices as marked on Friday. On Friday evening, the prices drop to \$2 for whatever you can fit in a bag, then Saturday morning, the prices drop again to only \$1 a bag.

## COLLECTION DATES

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After the Scouts help us set up Monday, June 5th, we will collect your sale item donations Tuesday, June 6th, thru Thursday, June 8th. We ask that all donations be delivered to the Church by Noon on Thursday and that you do not bring TVs, computer screens, car seats, or sofas.

## VOLUNTEERING

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We hope you will set aside a few hours or days that week to help: Tuesday thru Thursday from 9 am to 8 pm to sort and price; and then Friday, 8:30 am to 7 pm, and Saturday, 8:30 am- 1 pm, for the sale and cleanup. And as a bonus, Faith and Zip Fiordalis plan to be in town to help with the sale. It is always good to see them. A volunteer sign-up sheet will be posted on the PW bulletin board in the Gull Prairie Room.

## PROCEEDS

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Proceeds from the sale support the PW Mission.

## Greetings from Girl Scout Troop 80095!

by Mary Robertson

Greetings from Girl Scout Troop 80095! We are a troop of eight 3rd graders who meet at your church. (Thank you so much!)

The girls have been working on a couple different badges lately. The most recent was a painting badge. The girls learned about landscape painting and even painted a mural on troop leader Ms. Mary's basement wall! (A messy but beautiful endeavor.) They will finish out the badge by visiting the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts.



Before the painting badge, the girls completed their robotics badge. They learned about different robots and designed their own robots. Each of their robots had to have at least one moving part and a specific job to do. The girls also built a hydraulic arm that could pick things up when water was moved through various syringes and plastic tubes.

Before that, the girls worked on a philanthropy badge where we learned about helping others. The girls organized a food drive and donated food to a food pantry. We also talked with a librarian about the many ways that libraries help our communities.

We troop leaders love our girls and we are so grateful we are able to guide them through fun and thoughtful Girl Scout activities. Thank you so much for hosting us at your church! We look forward to updating you on our next adventures!

## KidsFirst

by Brooke Heck

“Your mother was like a vine in a vineyard planted beside the waters; she bore lush fruit and foliage because of the plentiful water, and she produced mighty branches, fit for rulers’ scepters.”

– Ezekiel 19:10-11

I love the picture this scripture paints. The vines representing the mother, the vineyard representing the family, and the waters representing the church. The closeness of the water to the vines is vital to the growth of the lush fruit and foliage. Can the vines grow without water right beside them? Sure. But will they be as strong and mighty? Absolutely not.

The church can provide such a powerful support system and community to mothers, and First Presbyterian of Richland is a perfect example of that. Our church is full of strong, mothers at every stage of life and the love and support is seen each week when you walk through the front doors. The KidsFirst ministry strives to stand beside the mothers of our congregation to support the spiritual growth and discipleship that begins at home. Our Mothers’ group offers our congregation’s moms who are in the thick of it to gather each month to support each other through the challenges and celebrations of motherhood. The Food Pantry allows our congregation to ensure that the mothers in our community have food to put on their table to nourish their families bodies. The Earth Care team works to protect God’s Earth so future generations of mother’s can continue producing “mighty branches”. I could continue on and on with all the ways our church is the water for so many mothers... I encourage you to look around at church this month and find all the ways that FPC is “feeding” your soul with the water you need to continue growing and flourishing!

To all the Moms and motherly figures in our congregation – thank you for the “mighty branches” you have raised from your vineyard. FPC of Richland is so fortunate to be your source of “water”.

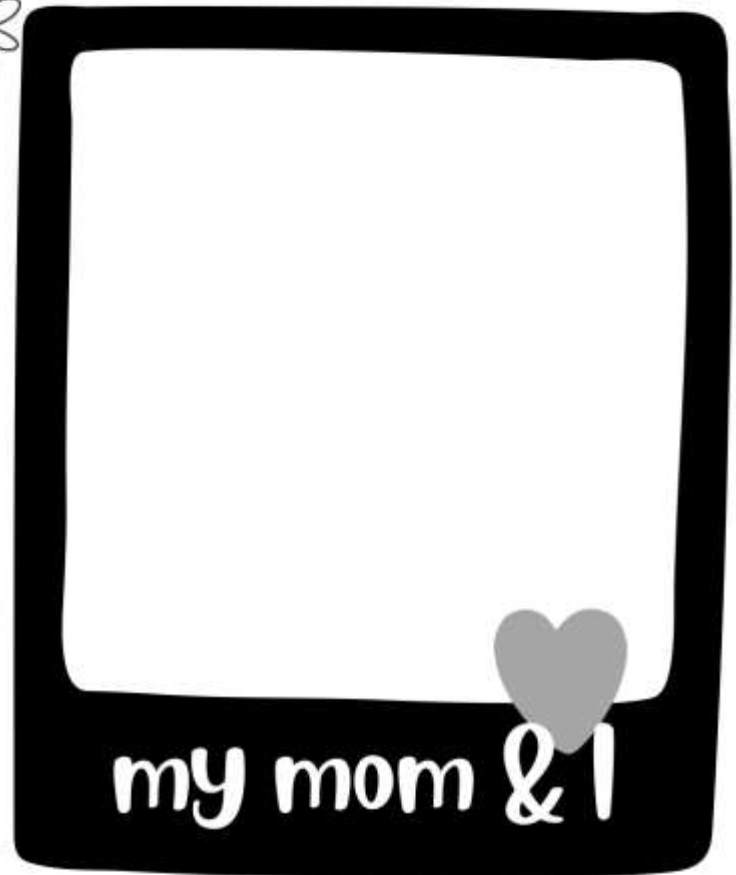


# All about my Mom

My mom's name  
is \_\_\_\_\_

My mom is \_\_\_\_\_  
years old.

My favorite thing to  
do with my mom  
is \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ My mom is great at  
\_\_\_\_\_

My mom always says  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



♥ I love you! ♥ \_\_\_\_\_

Love,

First Presbyterian Church  
8047 Church Street  
Richland, MI 49083

*ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED*

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF**

Dr. Mark W. Jennings, Pastor  
Larry Myland, Director of Music  
Brooke Heck, Sunday School Director  
Amber Beals, Coordinator of Small Group Ministry  
Rachel Little, Office Manager  
Connie Slater, Sexton  
Gretchen Ferris, Treasurer  
Chris Gobble, Financial Secretary  
Paul Gobble, Director of Communications

**MAY**